DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 234 541 EC 160 408

AUTHOR Ferguson, Anne M.
TITLE Children's Literature--For All Handicapped Children.
PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 20p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Literature; *Disabilities; Elementary Education; *Mainstreaming; Peer Acceptance; *Student Attitudes; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

Fourteen children's books which may help classroom teachers understand children with handicaps are described. The books deal realistically with a variety of handicaps (mental retardation, hearing impairments, blindness, physical disabilities, and multiple disabilities) and can be an effective tool in helping nonhandicapped children empathize and communicate with their handicapped peers. Following brief reviews of each of the books, specific benefits are suggested, including gaining insight and empathy, interaction skills, and becoming more sensitive toward the needs of the handicapped. (CL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
6
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED234541

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE - FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

ANNE M. FERGUSON

Associate Professor

Southeastern Louisiana University
University Station
P. O. Box 676
Hammond, Louisiana 70402

EC160 408

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Anne M Ferguson
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this article is to explore examples of children's books that can be used by the classroom teacher who is involved in the mainstreaming process. A discussion of the role of children's literature and specific books that deal realistically with various types of handicapped children is presented. General themes of these children's books are revealed. Suggestions are given to the classroom teacher concerning the use of children's books about the handicapped. Public Law 94-142 is discussed in terms of defining categorically the handicapped. The least restrictive environment and mainstreaming are explained. Included is a categorized bibliography of children's books which relate to various handicaps.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE - FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

The field of children's literature is a major area that can assist the regular classroom teacher in the mainstreaming process. Mainstreaming is a reality throughout many of the school systems in the United States. Presently, handicapped students are more visible within regular classroom settings than ever before in the history of the American school system.

Children's literature has kept up to date with current trends in education and with the problems society is facing in general. Children's books featuring the handicapped can enlighten and educate not only other children but at the same time can provide knowledge and understanding for the classroom teacher. What better way is there for one to understand or to relate to a handicapped person than through a vicarious experience? Reading a story that deals with a person and their handicap and at the same time emersing one's own self into the self of that character would seem to be one of the greatest means of understanding that could occur. Utilization of these types of books by the classroom teacher involved in the mainstreaming process should prove to be exciting and rewarding.

Who are we talking about when we refer to handicapped students? The Federal Government, having an interest in education, has given the public an awareness of the needs of the handicapped. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 is better known as Public Law 94-142. In essence, P.L. 94-142 is a funding bill designed to assist the states in accordance with their respective state plan. Some of the congressional findings in 1975 that resulted in the aforementioned law were:

1. Over 8 million handicapped children reside in the United States;
2. More than half of the handicapped children in the United States did not receive appropriate educational services;
3. One million of the handicapped children in the United States were excluded entirely or in part from the public school system and did not go through the education process with nonhandicapped classmates (Wallace, 1980, p. 3).

How does P.L. 94-142 define or categorize handicapped children? Specifically, the definition of handicapped children is those who are evaluated and diagnosed as being mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired,

deaf-blind, multihandicapped, or who have specific learning disabilities (Cartwright, Cartwright, & Ward, 1981, p. 11).

What are the major purposes of P.L. 94-142? There are four interpreted purposes. First, to ensure that all handicapped children have available to them Free Appropriate Public Education. Second, to ensure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents are protected. Third, to provide financial assistance to states and localities for the education of all handicapped children. And last, to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate handicapped children (Wallace, 1980, p. 3).

P.L. 94-142, Section 612 (5) (B) reads that the State must establish procedures to assure to the maximum extent appropriate that handicapped children . . . are educated with children who are not handicapped . . . removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature of severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily . . . (89 Stat. 781). (Public Law 94-142, 94th Congress, S. 6 Nov. 29, 1975).

The aforementioned has been interpreted to mean the least restrictive environment. In other words the Law

interpreted means that each handicapped child must be educated with nonhandicapped children to the extent appropriate to that child. Special classes, separate schooling, or removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment may occur only when the nature or severity of their handicap is such that education within a regular classroom, "with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (Wallace, 1980, p. 3-4).

What is mainstreaming? The term is used to indicate instructional placement of handicapped students within the educational program of their nonhandicapped counterparts. Mainstreaming is not mandated by law. It is a process of integrating handicapped students into regular classrooms (Cartwright, Cartwright, & Ward, 1981, p. 13-14). For these children, the regular classroom is then considered to be the least restrictive environment.

Children's literature is important in the mainstreaming process primarily because the classroom teacher needs to be more aware of basically what constitutes a handicapped child. Also, the classroom teacher needs to know how to educate the nonhandicapped student in becoming more sensitive toward the handicapped. Society, due to lack of knowledge, has ignored the handicapped person. Children's books that deal realistically with various

handicaps may be the classroom teachers' primary vehicle for perhaps bridging the communication gap among all students.

Acceptance, independence and respect seem to be the dominant themes in the realistic stories being published about children and their handicaps. My Friend Jacob by Lucille Clifton is a book about mental retardation. Jacob is slower than most children, yet at the same time is very large in size. Sam, a black boy, is his friend and helps Jacob do things. The interaction between these characters is not without frustration. They both learn to give and take. Good times and bad times are family experiences which are told by Beth in Sobol's book My Brother Steven is Retarded. Beth, Steven's sister, talks about the mixed feelings she has toward her older brother, Steven. She is embarrassed and hurt when others stare and laugh at him. This is a very sensitive text with actual black and white photographs.

Hard of hearing and deafness are current topics about which authors are writing. A Show of Hands by Sullivan is a pictorial introduction to signing. Pictures illustrate words and concepts. Easy presentation allows young children to learn simple signing. Greene and Dicker's Sign Language is for middle grade children. The book informatively depicts the development of sign language

and its use in conjunction with finger spelling, speech, reading, and other forms of communication to help individuals with impaired hearing. My Sister's Silent World by Arthur and Words In Our Hands by Litchfield are both real life experience stories for younger children. The first is about an eight year old deaf girl who takes a trip to the zoo with her family for her birthday. The second explains the facts and feelings of a nine-year-old boy's life with his deaf parents. Both of these books provide insight into special equipment used by the deaf.

Total blindness and partially sighted are current topics being written about for children to help them understand more about the visually handicapped. Blindness is explained in Weiss' Blindness and Thomas' The New Boy is Blind. Both authors write sensitively about a blind child who enters a new school and is placed in a regular classroom. Both books depict the characters realistically and discuss blindness and the special materials used by the blind. Class reactions and acceptance are warmly presented.

Information books such as Being Blind by Marcus and Litchfield's A Cane In Her Hand provide accurate information for other young readers. Marcus deals with common myths and misunderstandings about blindness. Blindness

is traced from birth to old age. Modern inventions that make life easier are included. Litchfield's character is shown using a special cane that serves as her eyes.

The most exciting children's books being published currently are about the orthopedically impaired. More and more of these children are being mainstreamed into the regular classroom. Generally, books in this area point out the similarities between children. Life is not vastly different from that of a normal child. Rachel by Fanshawe is a pioneer book. Rachel, who is restricted to a wheelchair, is shown in a regular school participating in many of the activities. White's Janet at School explains spina bifida graphically from a medical point of view. Colorful photographs show Janet at recess, using gym equipment with her classmates, and in other activities. Limitations and frustrations are revealed. Janet may not be able to jump rope but she can certainly turn the rope. Class interaction and acceptance is moving. Don't Feel Sorry for Paul by Bernard Wolf is a favorite book, not only for children but also adults. This is a photographic account of the daily life of a seven-year-old boy who's hands and feet were incompletely formed. Photographs show Paul putting on his artificial limbs as he begins his day. Two action filled weeks in Paul's life are shown.

Although he rides a bike, plays football, and is an expert horseman, Paul is not without his frustrations. His coping techniques are also explored.

One book concerning the multihandicapped is The Finger Game Miracle by Nancy Kelton. For younger children, this is a story about Helen Keller's difficulties and accomplishments while being blind, deaf and mute.

Current children's books about the speech impaired, seriously emotionally disturbed, and deaf-blind are scarce. Children's books about other health impaired problems are being published. Specific topics are allergies, epilepsy, diabetes, and obesity.

Children's literature contributes to the growth of a more compassionate and humanistic person. How can utilizing books about handicapped children help the regular classroom teacher involved in the mainstreaming process? The following are suggested answers to this question.

1. Reading and discussing these kinds of books allows children to experience empathy.
2. Dramatizing and role playing of specific handicapped characters provides real understanding and insight into the frustrations and abilities of a handicapped person.

3. Obtaining, through these books, the skills needed for interacting with the handicapped child in a classroom and in society.
4. Sharing these stories with students will make them more sensitive toward the needs of the handicapped.
5. Experiencing vicariously from books will help children accept the handicapped person, recognize the handicapped person's feelings of independence, and respect people that are different.

REFERENCES

Cartwright, P. G., Cartwright, C. A., & Ward, M. E. Educating special learners. California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1981.

Lilly, M. S. Children with exceptional needs. Dallas: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1979.

United States Government Document. Public Law 94-142, 94th Congress, S. 6., November 29, 1975, 89 Stat. 773-796.

Wallace, J. D. (Ed.). Clarification of P.L. 94-142 for the special educator. Westerville, Ohio: Research for Better Schools, Inc., 1980.

CHILDREN'S BOOK REFERENCE

Arthur, C. My sister's silent world. Nathan Talbot (Illus.). Chicago: Children's Press, 1979. (Ages 7-9).

Clifton, L. My friend Jacob. Thomas DiGrazia (Illus.). New York: Dutton, 1980. (Ages 6-10).

Fanshawe, E. Rachel. New York: Bradbury Press, 1975. (Ages 4-6).

Greene, L., & Dicker, E.B. Sign language. Caren Caraway (Illus.). New York: Franklin Watts, 1981. (Ages 10-14).

Kelton, N. The finger game miracle. Ron Recchio (Illus.). Milwaukee: Raintree Editions, 1977. (Ages 9-12).

Litchfield, A. B. A cane in her hand. Eleanor Mill (Illus.). Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1977. (Ages 4-8)

Litchfield, A. B. Words in our hands. Helen Cogancherry (Illus.). Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1980. (Ages 4-6).

Marcus, R. Being blind. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1981. (Ages 10 and up).

Sobol, H. L. My brother Steven is retarded. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1977. (Ages 8-12)

Sullivan, M. B., & Bourke, L. A show of hands. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Co., 1980. (Ages 8-12).

Thomas, W. E. The new boy is blind. New York: Julian Messner, 1980. (Ages 6-10).

Weiss, M. E. Blindness. New York: Franklin Watts, 1980. (Ages 10-13).

White, P. Janet at school. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1978. (K-3).

Wolf. B. Don't feel sorry for Paul. New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1974. (Ages 8 and up).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mentally Retarded

Baldwin, A. N. A little time. New York: Viking, 1978. (Ages 9-11).

Clifton, L. My friend Jacob. Thomas DiGrazia (Illus.). New York: Dutton, 1980. (Ages 6-10).

Dunbar, R. Mental retardation. Franklin Watts, 1978. (Ages 10 and up).

Fassler, J. One little girl. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1959. (Ages 5-10)

Jennings, J. Why Joy? New York: Christian Herald Books, 1978. (Ages 12 and up).

Klein, G. The blue rose. Lawrence Hill & Co., 1974.

Ominsky, E. Jon O. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. (Ages 4-9).

Sobol, H. L. My brother Steven is retarded. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1977. (Ages 8-12).

Deaf - Hard of Hearing

Arthur, C. My sister's silent world. Nathan Talbot (Illus.). Chicago: Children's Press, 1979. (Ages 7-9.

Greene, L. & Dicker, E. B. Sign language. Caren Caraway (Illus.). New York: Franklin Watts, 1981. (Ages 10-14).

Hanlon, E. The swing. Chicago: Bradbury Press, 1979. (Ages 5-7).

Litchfield, A. B. A button in her ear. Chicago: Albert Whitman Co., 1976. (Ages 5-8)

Litchfield, A. B. Words in our hands. Helen Cogancherry (Illus.). Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1980. (Ages 4-6).

Montgomery, E. R. The mystery of the boy next door. Ethel Gold (Illus.). Champaign, Ill.: Garrard Publishing Co., 1978. (Ages 5-8).

Patterson, J. I have a sister - my sister is deaf. Deborah Ray (Illus.). New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1977. (Ages 4-7).

Peter, D. Claire and Emma. Jeremy Finlay (Illus.). New York: The John Day Co., Inc., 1977. (Ages 5-8).

Sullivan, M. B., & Bourke, L. A show of hands. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1980. (Ages 6-8).

Wahl, J. Jamie's tiger. Tomie DePaola (Illus.). New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1978. (Ages 4-8).

Wolf, B. Anna's silent world. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1977. (Ages 8-12).

Visually Handicapped

Allan, M. E. The view beyond my father. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1977. (Ages 12-up).

Brown, M. Arthur's eyes. Boston: Little, Borwn, and Co., 1979. (Primary)

Litchfield, A. A cane in her hand. Eleanor Mill (Illus.). Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1977. (Ages 4-8).

MacLachlan, P. Through grandpa's eyes. New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1979. (Ages 5-8).

Marcus, R. Being blind. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1981. (Ages 10-up).

Thomas, W. E. The new boy is blind. New York: Julian Messner, 1980. (Ages 6-10).

Weiss, M. Blindness. New York: Franklin Watts, 1980. (Ages 10-13).

Weiss, M. Seeing through the dark. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Co., 1976. (Ages 10-13).

Wolf, B. Connie's new eyes. Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1976. (Ages 6-12).

Wosmek, F. A bowl of sun. Chicago: Children's Press, 1976. (Ages 7-10).

Orthopedically Impaired

Fanshawe, E. Rachel. Michael Charlton (Illus.). New York: Bradbury Press, 1975. (Ages 4-6).

Mack, N. Tracy. Milwaukee: Raintree Publishers, Ltd., 1976. (Ages 4-8).

Robinet, H. Jay and the marigold. Chicago: Children's Press, 1976. (Ages 6-12).

Slepian, J. The Alfred summer. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980. (Ages 10-12).

Slepian, J. Lester's turn. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981. (Ages 12-up).

Udry, J. M. Mary Jo's grandmother. Eleanor Mill (Illus.). Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1970. (Ages 5-12).

White, P. Janet at school. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1978. (Ages K-3).

Wolf, B. Don't feel sorry for Paul. New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1974. (Ages 8 and up).

Other Health Impaired

Allen, M. N. One, two, three-ah-choo! Dick Gackenbach (Illus.). New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980. (Ages 5-8). (Allergic child).

Corcoran, B. Child of the morning. Atheneum, 1982. (Epilepsy)

Phillips, B. Don't call me Fatso. Milwaukee: Raintree Publishers, Inc., 1980. (Ages 5-10). (Obesity).

Reidman, S. R. Diabetes. New York: Franklin Watts, 1980. (Ages 10-up).

Multihandicapped

Kelton, N. The finger game miracle. Ron Recchio (Illus.). Milwaukee: Raintree Editions, 1977. (Ages 9-12).

General

Harries, J. They triumphed over their handicaps. New York: Franklin Watts, 1981. (Ages 7-10).

Kamien, J. What if you couldn't . . .? Signe Hanson (Illus.). New York: Scribner, 1979. (Ages 4-6).

Pursell, M. S. A look at physical handicaps. Minneapolis: Learner Publications Co., 1976. (Ages 5-9).

Sullivan, M. B. Feeling free. Massachussetts: Addison-Wesley, 1979. (Ages 10-up).